

Because It's My Name by Edna Left

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Summary: What if Benny never died? What if the Demogorgon never happened? What if Benny decided to take care of Eleven? This is a quick story for everyone who thinks Benny deserved better!

Because It's My Name

"Hey, French Fry! You ready to go?" Benny ruffled through his coat pockets, "You haven't seen my wallet anywhere, have you?"

A muffled "Mhm" came from the other room.

Benny stood up straight, "Mhm you have seen it or mhm you're ready to go?"

"Yes," Eleven stepped out of her bedroom holding Benny's wallet smiling.

Benny constantly forgets that this is the same little girl in a hospital gown he caught stealing from his kitchen. She had no hair and was sickly skinny. Now she's was wearing overalls with a red shirt, her face pink with nourishment and her curly hair almost covering her eyes.

Benny sighed and smiled, "Why do you have my wallet?"

"Looking names."

"In my wallet?" Benny laughed, "You want to be named Punch Card Holder, do you?"

Eleven kept staring at him with a blank face, "Benedict."

"Oh, no that's my name."

"But Benny," Eleven looked puzzled.

"Is a nickname," Benny stuffed his wallet into his pant pocket and grabbed his coat.

Eleven didn't move, "Nick? Name?"

"Oh," Benny walked back to her and went down to her level, "Benny is short for Benedict. No one calls me Benedict. Do I look like a Benedict?" He stood up tall, held his breath, sucked in his gut, and puffed out his chest. Eleven started laughing.

He ruffled her short curls, "You can pick Benedict if you want, but I would prefer if you didn't."

"Okay," Eleven smiled back at him.

"But the name you pick today can have a nickname too. Did you pick one out of that book I gave you?"

Eleven grabbed the worn out baby naming book on the coffee table and handed it to Benny. Bookmarks made from pieces of old menus marked a few pages. Benny opened it and read out the circled names, "Joan, Richard, Henry, and Natalia?" Eleven stared back at him worried. Benny set the book down, "Look if you're not ready to do this today we can always reschedule it."

Eleven looked to the ground, "Again?"

"Yeah again," Benny tapped on her nose and smiled.

Eleven's eyes glossed over, "But I want a name."

Benny put his hand on her shoulder, "Well I closed down the shop for the afternoon and our appointment isn't for another hour, let's get some candy and decide on the way. You can always change your mind."

Benny picked up her coat and handed it to her.

"Okay," Eleven put her coat on and walked to the door.

Benny and Eleven walked through the door to Sweets N' Things. An older man stood at register wearing multicolored suspenders and a white button down shirt. Roger, the owner, greeted them as they walked in, "Afternoon, Benny and little one. Pick out a good name yet?"

Eleven took a small step behind Benny.

"Not yet," Benny put his arm around her, "But today might be the day, right French Fry?" He smiled at her. She smiled back and nodded. She ran towards the Pixie Stix.

Roger laughed, "Might as well call you Sweetie with that sweet tooth you got."

"Ew," Eleven looked back at him disgusted.

Benny shot a look at Roger, "No, that's awful."

Roger's face got red, "You're right. That was bad, sorry."

Eleven went back to the candy, picking up a couple Pixie Stix and Now or Later's. A young boy walked up next to her looking at the jaw breakers. He looked back at Roger, who was too embarrassed to look at Eleven anymore, and started putting a few pieces of candy in his pocket. Eleven stared at him in shock.

Benny grabbed the kid's arm, "You're gonna pay for those, aren't you kid?"

The boy threw the candy at Benny's face, hitting him right in the eye, "Goddammit!" The kid wriggled out of Benny's hold and started for the door.

"No!" Eleven screamed at the kid and the door slammed shut. The boy kept trying to open it, "Say sorry!"

"What the hell?" The boy turned back to Eleven.

"Say sorry!" she screamed louder now. The ground started to shake, jars of candy fell off the wall onto the floor, the lights started flickering, the boy slammed up against the nearby wall. "Say sorry!" she yelled one last time.

"No stop!" Benny ran towards her. He grabbed both her shoulders and looked at her in the eye, "Calm down!"

Eleven looked away from the boy and at Benny, her face relaxed, tears welled in her eyes, and blood ran down her nose. Everything stopped. "Sorry," she choked back.

"I swear she used magic or something on me!" The boy was standing next to Roger crying from fright.

Roger, on the phone now, snapped at him, "What are you even talking about? We had a small earthquake."

The kid grabbed Roger's arm and stared back at Eleven standing behind Benny on the other side of the shop, "Small earthquake? You've got to....I'm telling you it was-"

Roger shook him off, "There's no such thing as - Oh hello, are you Charlie's mom? He's at my candy shop, Sweet N' Stuff. I caught him trying to steal..."

Benny led Eleven out the door, "Best if you wait out here. I'll keep an eye on the kid."

"Sorry," Eleven tried to walk away but Benny turned her back to him.

"Here," he pulled out a napkin from his pocket and handed it to her, "I'm okay with you doing this stuff at home, but I can't have you do it out here. We've talked about this. You could hurt yourself or someone else. You understand right?"

Eleven wiped the blood from her nose, "Yes."

"Okay, wait over on the bench. I'll be out in a few minutes." Benny went back inside and Eleven sat on the already preoccupied bench.

A young boy sat there, vigorously writing in a notebook. He barely noticed Eleven sit next to him, but he scooted over when he felt her presence. He didn't look up from his notebook. Eleven couldn't help but look at what he was writing. He had terrible handwriting and it contained words she had never seen before. She tried to sound out the words at the top of the page.

"Dung On Mass Tour?" she read aloud.

The boy corrected her, "Dungeon Master."

"Dungeon. Master." she said back to herself.

"Yeah, from D&D," the boy quickly looked at her. She scrunched up her face. He explained, "D&D? Dungeons and Dragons? It's a role-playing game. I'm the Dungeon Master. Have you ever heard of it?"

Eleven quickly shook her head.

"I have a campaign that I make for my friends."

Still confused, she asked "Campaign?"

"I, uh. I make up stories and adventures for my friends to go on. Like with monsters and magic and danger!"

Eleven stared at him terrified. She scooted away. The boy laughed, "They're not real! It's all made up. Just for fun. Like now I'm making secret tunnel with promising gold at the end but there is no gold! There's a Lycanthrope that they have to fight. Like a werewolf! And they think that's the boss but actually the Princess -" The boy looked up at her and realized she wasn't following, "It's a lot of fun, but it's not for everyone."

"What is master?" Eleven asked.

"What's a master?" Mike made a confused face, "Like someone who is really good at something. A really powerful person."

Benny, seeing her talking to a new person, stepped out of the candy shop and yelled to her, "Hey, French Fry! You okay?"

She turned back and nodded at him. Benny skeptically stared at the boy on the bench and sunk back into the store.

The boy put out his hand, "I'm Michael by the way, but everyone calls me Mike. What's your name?"

Eleven looked at him wide eyed, "Uh..."

"Your dad calls you French Fry, but that's not your name is it?"

"Not my dad."

"Oh sorry." He pulled away his hand in embarrassment. They sat in silence.

She finally whispered, "Eleven."

"Eleven what?"

"I'm Eleven." She pointed at herself.

"Like, that's your name? Weird."

Eleven looked down and slid off the bench.

Mike jumped off too, "No I didn't mean weird in a bad way. Sorry. I just, I've never met a kid named Eleven. Do people call you El for short?"

Mike's mother walked out of a nearby shop and yelled at him, "Mike! Come on, let's go."

"OKAY!" he screamed back. Mike collected his things and ran to catch up with his mom, turning back to say goodbye, "See ya later, El!"

Eleven put her hand up slowly to wave and quietly said, "Bye Mike."

Benny looked at the completed form before handing it in. He raised an eyebrow and looked at Eleven, "You sure about this, French Fry?"

Eleven smiled and nodded, "Yes."

Benny smiled back at her and they walked the papers to the front desk. The woman sitting there was wearing a black pant suit and had thin framed glasses. Her hair was in a perfect bun, everything in place. She read through papers on her desk, marking things with a red pen. She terrified Eleven.

Benny handed her the papers. The woman took them without looking up and read it over. Eleven was nervous. She wasn't sure if they would accept it or maybe they would change her name without telling her. What if they decided she didn't get a name at all? She wouldn't be anyone.

The woman filed the papers, looked back at the scared young girl in front of her and gave a small smile, "Looks like you're all set, Eleven Master Hammond."

El beamed, being called by her full name for the first time.